

FLUORIDE & DRINKING WATER



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment

*The facts about your
oral health and the
water you drink.*

*"... One of the
**10 GREATEST
PUBLIC HEALTH
ACHIEVEMENTS**
in the 20th century."*

*~ Center for
Disease Control*

What is fluoride?

- Fluoride is a natural occurring ion of the periodic element, Fluorine.
- Fluoride is the 13th most common element in the earth's crust and has been present as an element since the earth formed.
- Fluoride occurs naturally in our water, food, bodies and environment.
- Fluoride is the compound used to fluoridate drinking water to promote oral health.
- Fluoride is used in toothpaste to prevent tooth decay.

FLUORIDE MYTHS

MYTH: Fluoride causes cancer.

FACT: Scientific studies have failed to demonstrate links between water fluoridation and an increase in any type or number of cancer cases.

MYTH: Water fluoridation is banned in Europe.

FACT: An estimated 405 million people in 60 countries worldwide enjoy the benefits of fluoridated water.

FACT: In some countries, the drinking water is not received from large community systems, so they do not fluoridate the water. However, these communities do supplement the natural levels of fluoride by using fluoridated salt or other fluoride sources.

MYTH: Water fluoridation is mass medication.

FACT: The addition of fluoride to drinking water is not considered mass medication. Fluoride exists naturally in the water and environment. The fluoridation of drinking water is simply adjusting the level of a natural occurring element to provide a substantial health benefit to the public.

Approximately **72%**
of Colorado residents
currently receive
optimally fluoridated
drinking water

A COST EFFECTIVE METHOD FOR

**ELIMINATING
ORAL HEALTH
DISPARITIES**

BENEFITS EVERYONE DESPITE AGE, RACE,
SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC STATUS.

just the FACTS

**50¢
PER YEAR**

*approximate cost
to fluoridate
community
drinking water
per person*

REDUCES
DENTAL
DECAY BY
20%
to
40%

\$6,105
*Lifetime cost
to treat
ONE
decayed molar*



each
\$1
spent

*community water
fluoridation
saves money!*

saves
\$38

Adding to natural fluoride levels in drinking water helps prevent tooth decay and reduces oral disease by as much as 40 percent. The national Healthy People goal is to increase the percentage of citizens receiving fluoridated water from their community systems to 80% by 2020.

Fluoride works to prevent cavities in several ways... ingested fluoride is found in the saliva and plaque, and slows the deterioration of enamel from bacterial decay. It also re-mineralizes enamel that has been compromised. Bacteria thrive on sugars found in the mouth - fluoride inhibits the process that the bacteria feed on the sugars, therefore slowing the damage.

There are benefits of drinking fluoridated water for all ages. Babies benefit during the formation of their teeth, children have reduced occurrences of cavities and painful procedures, adults are able to slow down and even reverse the progress of cavities, and elderly people keep their teeth longer due to the decrease in cavities.

1945

Grand Rapids, Mich. is
the first U.S. city to
treat its water supply
with fluoride.

75%

OF AMERICANS
RECEIVE FLUORIDE
THROUGH THEIR
COMMUNITY
SYSTEMS

health benefits
from fluoridated
water have been
recognized
worldwide for

**70
YEARS**

TECHNICAL FACTS

Fluoridation additives are held to the same testing standards as other water treatment additives, the NSF/ANSI 60 standard. The National Sanitation Foundation led the development of American National Standards Institute standards for all materials and products that treat drinking water.

The certification process for the NSF/ANSI 60 standard ensures that fluoridation additives meet the highest standards of quality, safety and purity to protect public health.

All Colorado fluoridation installations in drinking water facilities are reviewed and approved by Water Quality Control Division Engineers to ensure proper design according to industry standards and specifications.

Water treatment facilities in Colorado are regulated by national standards through the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Facilities are classified by their size and complexity. They are required to employ certified operators to oversee operations. Rest assured that your drinking water is being monitored by trained professionals!

Community systems that fluoridate their water are eligible to apply for grant funding through the Grants and Loans Unit in the Water Quality Control Division.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CDPHE www.colorado.gov/cdphe/community-water-fluoridation
The Center for Disease Control www.cdc.gov/fluoridation
NSF International (national sanitation foundation) www.nsf.org

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